



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of : .

Yoshikado SANEMITSU : .

Serial No. 09/902,588 : Group Art Unit: 2876

Filed: July 12, 2001 : Examiner: Ahshik Kim

For: PC ADAPTER CARDS AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME

VERIFICATION OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

I, Kazuhisa INABA , declare that I am conversant in both the Japanese and English languages and that the English translation as attached hereto is an accurate translation of Japanese Patent Application No.

2000-283655 filed on September 19, 2000 .

Signed this 2nd day of July , 2004

Kazuhisa Inaba
Kazuhisa INABA



PATENT OFFICE
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

This is to certify that the annexed is a true copy of
the following application as filed with this Office.

Date of Application: September 19, 2000

Application Number: Patent Application No. 2000-283655

Applicant(s): Mitsubishi Denki Kabushiki Kaisha

February 2, 2001

Commissioner,

Patent Office

Kozo OIKAWA

(seal)

2001-3002693



Document Name: Application for Patent
Docket No.: 526191JP01
Date of Application: September 19, 2000
Addressee: Commissioner, Patent Office
International Patent Classification: G06K 19/067

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Payment of Fees:
Procedure: Prepaid
Prepayment Book No.: 013262
Amount to be paid: ¥ 21,000

Attached document:
Item: Specification 1 copy
Item: Drawing 1 copy
Item: Abstract 1 copy

Request for proof transmission: Yes



Applicant Record

Identification No.: 000006013

1. Date of Registration: August 24, 1990 (newly recorded)

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DOCUMENT NAME: SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION:

MINI-CARD AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME

CLAIMS:

- 5 1. A method of manufacturing a mini-card comprising the steps of:
 mounting a semiconductor memory device on each of individual
 substrates arranged in an array of substrates, in which the individual substrates
 are connected together;
 covering the individual substrates with respective cases;
10 2. The method of manufacturing a mini-card according to claim 1, wherein,
 dividing the substrate array to provide encased individual substrates each
 completing a mini-card having the semiconductor memory device embedded
 therein.
15 3. The method of manufacturing a mini-card according to claim 1, wherein,
 during the covering step, each substrate is sandwiched between top and bottom
 case segments.
 4. A mini-card is characterized in that the mini-card is manufactured by the
 method of according to any one of claims 1 to 3.
20 5. A mini-card comprising:
 a substrate on which at least one semiconductor memory device is
 mounted; and
 a case which encases the substrate;
 wherein the substrate is partially exposed outwardly of the case.

25 DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE INVENTION

[0001]

UTILIZED FIELD OF THE INVENTION:

The present invention relates to a mini-card with a semiconductor memory device.

5 [0002]

PRIOR ART:

Now, mini-card with a non-volatile semiconductor memory device such as a PCMCIA card (hereinafter referred to as PC card) and an integrated circuit card (hereinafter referred to as IC card) have come to be spreading. Particularly, 10 the mini-card is reduced in size to a postage-stamp size. The mini-card includes a semiconductor memory device such as an electrically erasable programmable ROM (hereinafter referred to as EEPROM) and one or more capacitors encased within a thin plastic case.

[0003]

15 Fig. 8 shows each step of the conventional method of manufacturing the mini-card 300. In the method, mounting semiconductor memory devices 302, 303 on a substrate array 301, dividing the substrate array 301 to provide the separate substrates, encasing the individual substrates in case halves 305, 306 for mini-card. Each step of the conventional method is explained as follows.

20 (1) A step of mounting one or more circuit elements on the substrate array:

Circuit elements such as semiconductor memory devices 302 and 303 and a capacitor 304 are mounted on the individual substrates forming the substrate array 301 as shown in Fig. 8(b).

(2) A step of dividing the substrate array to provide the separate substrates:

25 The substrate array is divided to provide the separate substrates 310 each

having the semiconductor memory devices 302 and 303 etc. mounted thereon as shown in Fig. 8(c).

(3) A step of encasing the individual substrates:

Each substrate is encased in a plastic case by sandwiched it between top and bottom case halves 305 and 306, to thereby complete mini-cards 300 as shown in Fig. 8(d).

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of the conventional mini-card..

[0004]

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED BY INVENTION:

Generally, before the encasing step, the substrate array is divided to separate the individual substrates 310. Each substrate 310 of a size about equal to that of a postage-stamp is difficult to handle during the encasing step for encasing the individual substrate 310 in case halves 305, 306 for mini-card, resulting in decrease of the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards 300.

[0005]

Therefore, it is an object of the present invention to improve the rate of manufacture of mini-cards each having a semiconductor memory device.

[0006]

MEANS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM:

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a mini-card with a semiconductor memory device. The method includes the steps of:

mounting a semiconductor memory device on each of individual substrates arranged in an array of substrates, in which the individual substrates are connected together;

covering the individual substrates with respective cases; dividing the substrate array to provide encased individual substrates each completing a mini-card having the semiconductor memory device embedded therein.

5 [0007]

In another aspect of the present invention, according to the above method, during the covering step, each substrate is sandwiched between top and bottom case segments.

[0008]

10 In a further aspect of the present invention, according to the above method, during the covering step, each substrate is molded into case.

[0009]

In a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a mini-card manufactured according to the above manufacturing method.

15 [0010]

The present invention also provides a mini-card with a semiconductor memory device including a substrate and a semiconductor memory device arranged on the substrate covered with a case. Additionally, the substrate is partially exposed outwardly of the case.

20 [0011]

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Some embodiment of the present invention will be described referring to the accompanying drawings.

[0012]

25 Embodiment 1

Referring to Fig. 1, there is shown a method of manufacturing mini-cards 10 according to the first embodiment of the present invention. According to the method, during the step of covering with the plastic cases 5 and 6, an array 1 of substrates connected in line together is used without the individual substrates separated from each other. The method includes a step of mounting the semiconductor memory devices 2 and 3 and a capacitor on each of the substrates then connected in line together, a step of covering the substrates of the array 1 between plastic case segments 5 and 6 such that mini-cards can be made, and a step of dividing the array 1 of the encased substrates to provide the mini-cards 10. The method of manufacturing the mini-card 10 is explained as follows.

(1) A step of mounting circuit elements such as a semiconductor memory device:

Circuit elements such as semiconductor memory devices 2 and 3 and a capacitor 4 are mounted on each of the substrates that are continuing along a horizontal direction of the individual substrates as shown in Fig. 1(a). Arrangement of the elements may be performed by soldering. In addition, at least one semiconductor memory device may be arranged. Preferably, a semiconductor memory device includes a non-volatile semiconductor memory device such as EEPROM. The circuit elements may not include only a capacitor, but also other element, for example, a resister that will be needed for other application. It is noted that the substrate array 1 may be continued along any directions, for example, longitudinal direction or horizontal direction of the individual substrates.

(2) A step of covering with plastic case:

Each of the individual substrates forming the substrate array 1 is covered between the plastic case segments 5 and 6 as shown in Fig. 1(c). Referring to Fig. 1(c), the plastic case segments may be top and bottom plastic case segments 5 and 6, respectively so that the substrate can be sandwiched between the top and bottom plastic case segments. Then, a mini-card including a semiconductor memory device arranged on the substrate covered with the plastic case is made. The top and bottom plastic case segments may be fixed by way of ultrasonic bonding, gluing, or in any other ways. Fig. 2 shows a sectional view taken along the A-A' line in Fig. 1(c). Referring to Fig. 2, each substrate can be covered with the plastic case. At least one-side plastic case, for example, top or bottom plastic case segment 5 or 6 may be used. After the covering step, the plastic case exposes partially the substrate.

[0014]

(3) A step of dividing the substrate array:

Each mini-card 10 and 10a including the semiconductor memory devices 2 and 3 arranged on the associated substrate covered with the plastic case segments 5 and 6 is separated as shown in Fig. 1(d). The dividing may be performed by cutting with a cutter.

[0015]

According to the method of manufacturing the mini-cards, the substrate array is used without the individual substrates being dividing. In addition, each of the individual substrates forming the substrate array is covered with plastic case. On the conventional method of manufacturing the mini-card, the substrate array is divided into the separate substrates after the step of arranging the element, so

that the individual substrates have to be handled independently during the subsequent covering step and other processes. On the other hand, according to the method of the first embodiment, the substrate array is used without the individual substrates separated from each other during the covering step.

5 Therefore, during the covering step, the multiple substrates can be handled easily in the form of the substrate array and, accordingly, the manufacturing rate can be made higher.

[0016]

Fig. 3 shows a perspective view of the mini-card 10 which is manufactured
10 by the method of the first embodiment. Since the mini-cards 10 are fabricated by cutting the substrate array to separate the individual encased substrates, each mini-card 10 exposes partially the substrate 1 at the divided portion.

[0017]

It is noted that the term "mini-card" means a card having a size that is
15 similar to the PC card (PCMCIA standard card). The mini-card may include a card having a postage-stamp size.

[0018]

Embodiment 2

Fig. 5 shows a method of manufacturing the mini-cards 20 according to a
20 second embodiment of the present invention. The method differs from the method of the first embodiment in that, during the covering step, each substrate is molded from plastic without being sandwiched between top and bottom plastic case segments. The method includes a step of mounting a semiconductor memory device 12, 13, and a capacitor 14 on each of individual substrates
25 arranged in an array of substrates, in which the individual substrates are

connected together, a step of covering the individual substrates with a plastic case by molding into the plastic case; and a step of dividing the substrate array to provide encased individual substrates each completing a mini-card having the semiconductor memory device embedded therein.

5 The method of the second embodiment will be explained as follows.

(1) A step of mounting one or more circuit elements on the substrate array:

Referring to Fig. 5(b), circuit elements such as semiconductor memory devices 12, and 13 and a capacitor 14 are mounted on the individual substrates forming the substrate array as shown in Fig. 5(a). Arrangement of the elements may be performed by soldering. In addition, at least one semiconductor memory device may be arranged. Preferably, a semiconductor memory device includes a non-volatile semiconductor memory device such as EEPROM. The circuit elements may not include only a capacitor, but also other element, for example, a resister that will be needed for other application. It is noted that the substrate array 1 may be continued along any directions, for example, longitudinal direction or horizontal direction of the individual substrates.

[0019]

(2) A step of covering with plastic case:

Each of the individual substrates forming the substrate array 11 is covered with a plastic case 15 as shown in Fig. 5(c). Referring to Fig. 5(c), each of substrates is molded into the plastic case 15. Then, a mini-card including a semiconductor memory device mounted on the substrate covered with the plastic case is made. The plastic case 15 may be formed by molding the substrate array into a mold. Fig. 6 shows a sectional view taken along the C-C' line in Fig. 25 5(c). Referring to Fig. 6, each substrate can be covered with plastic case. At

least one-side of substrate array 11 may be covered with plastic case 15. After the covering step with the plastic case 15, the plastic case 15 exposes partially the substrate.

[0020]

5 (3) A step of dividing the mini-card:

Each mini-card 20, and 20a including the semiconductor memory devices 12, and 13 mounted on the associated substrate covered with plastic case 15 is separated as shown in Fig. 5(d). The dividing may be performed by cutting with a cutter.

10 [0021]

According to the method of manufacturing the mini-card of second embodiment, the substrate array is used without the individual substrates being dividing. In addition, each of the individual substrates forming the substrate array is covered with plastic case by molding into the plastic case. Therefore, during 15 the covering step, the multiple substrates can be handled easily in the form of the substrate array and, accordingly, the manufacturing rate can be made higher.

[0022]

Fig. 7 shows a perspective view of the mini-card 20 which is manufactured by the method of the second embodiment. Since the mini-cards 20 are 20 fabricated by cutting the substrate array to separate the individual encased substrates, each mini-card 20 exposes partially the substrate 11 at the divided portion.

[0023]

EFFECTS OF THE INVENTION:

25 According to the method of this invention, the substrate array, that is, the

array of multiple substrates connected in line together is used, and encasing the individual substrates is carried out without the multiple substrate being separated from the substrate array. Consequently, if the individual substrate has a postage stamp size, the substrate array can easily be handled during the covering step.

5 Therefore, the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards can be increased.

[0024]

According to the method of this invention, the individual substrates while being connected in line with each other is sandwiched between top and bottom case segments. Consequently, the substrate array can be dealt with easily, resulting in increase of the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards.

10

[0025]

According to the method of this invention, the individual substrates while connected in line with each other may be molded into cases. Consequently, the substrate array can be dealt with easily, resulting in increase of the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards.

15

[0026]

According to this invention, the mini-card is manufactured by the above manufacturing method. Therefore, the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards can be increased.

20

[0027]

With the mini-card of this invention, the substrate is partially exposed to the outside of the case, because the mini-cards may be manufactured by using the array of the substrates which are subsequently covered with the respective cases. Therefore, the rate of manufacture of the mini-cards can be increased.

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

Figs. 1(a) to 1(d) are perspective views showing the sequence of manufacture of the mini-cards according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a sectional view taken along the A-A' line in Fig. 1(c);

5 Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the mini-card of the first embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 4 is a sectional view taken along the B-B' line in Fig. 3;

10 Figs. 5(a) to 5(d) are perspective views showing the method of manufacturing the mini-card according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 6 is a sectional view taken along the C-C' line in Fig. 5(c);

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of the mini-card of the second embodiment of the present invention;

15 Figs. 8(a) to 8(d) are perspective views showing the sequence of manufacture of the mini-card according to the conventional method; and

Fig. 9 is a perspective view of the conventional mini-card.

REFERENCE NUMERAL:

1, 11 array,	2, 3, 12, 13 semiconductor memory devices,
4, 14 capacitor,	5 top plastic case segment,
20 6 bottom plastic case segment,	10, 10a, 20, 20a mini-card,
15 plastic case,	300 mini-card,
301 array,	302, 303 semiconductor memory devices,
304 capacitor,	305 top case halve
306 bottom case halve,	310 individual substrate

DOCUMENT NAME: ABSTRACT

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED BY THE INVENTION:

It is an object of the present invention to improve the rate of manufacture of mini-cards each having at least one semiconductor memory device.

5 MEANS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM:

A method of manufacturing a mini-card with at least one semiconductor memory device includes the steps of: mounting a semiconductor memory device on each of individual substrates arranged in an array of substrates, in which the individual substrates are connected together; covering the individual substrates with respective cases; and dividing the substrate array to provide encased individual substrates each completing a mini-card having the semiconductor memory device embedded therein.

10 SELECTED FIGURE: Fig. 1

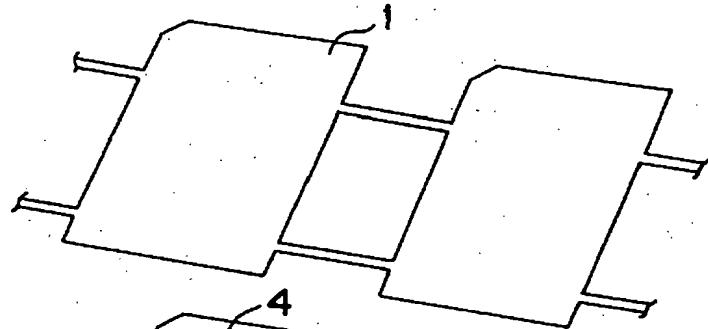
提出日 平成12年 9月19日
整理番号 = 526191JP01 頁: 1/ 6



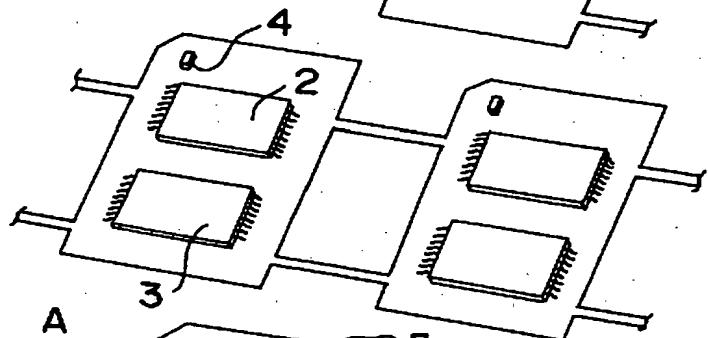
[Document Name] DRAWINGS

Fig. 1]

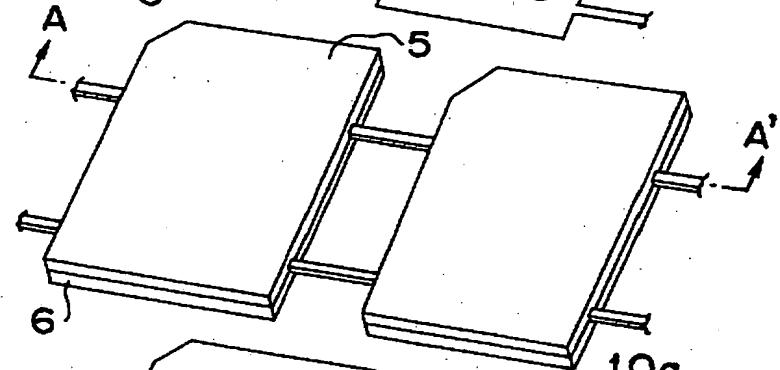
(a)



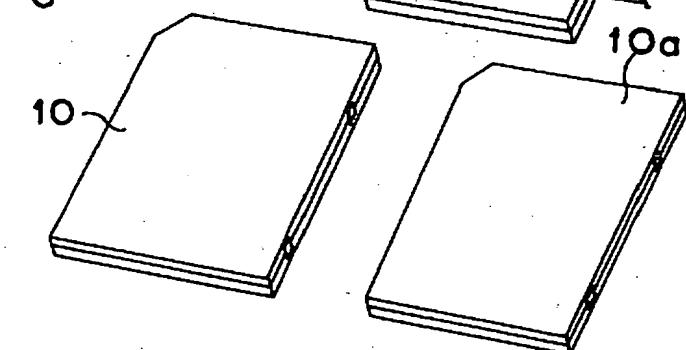
(b)



(c)



(d)



1 : array

2,3 : semiconductor memory devices

4 : capacitor

5 : top plastic case segment

6 : bottom plastic case segment

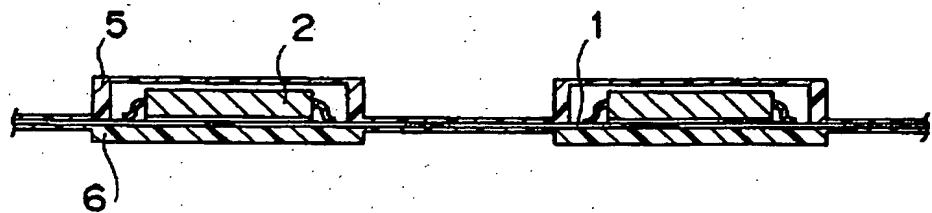
10, 10a : mini-card

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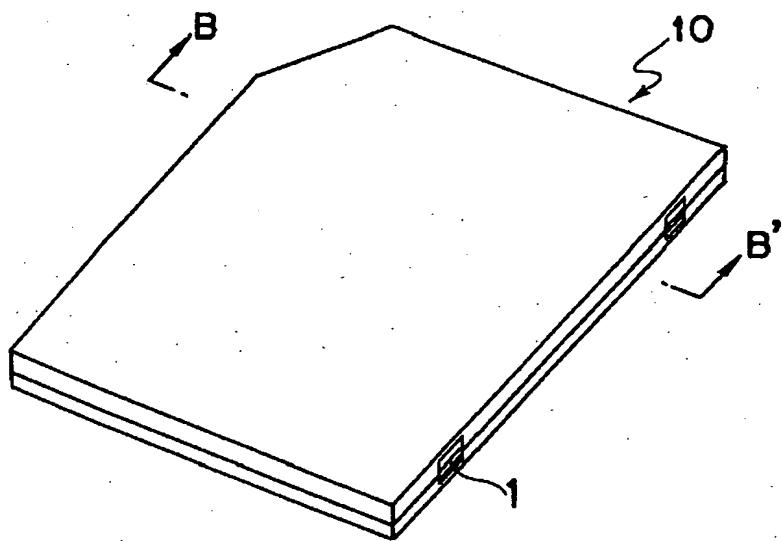
整理番号 526191JP01

提出日 平成12年 9月19日
頁数 2/ 6

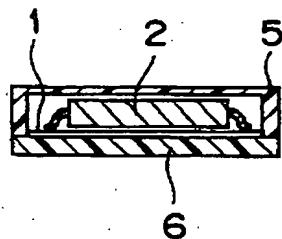
[Fig. 2]



[Fig. 3]



[Fig. 4]

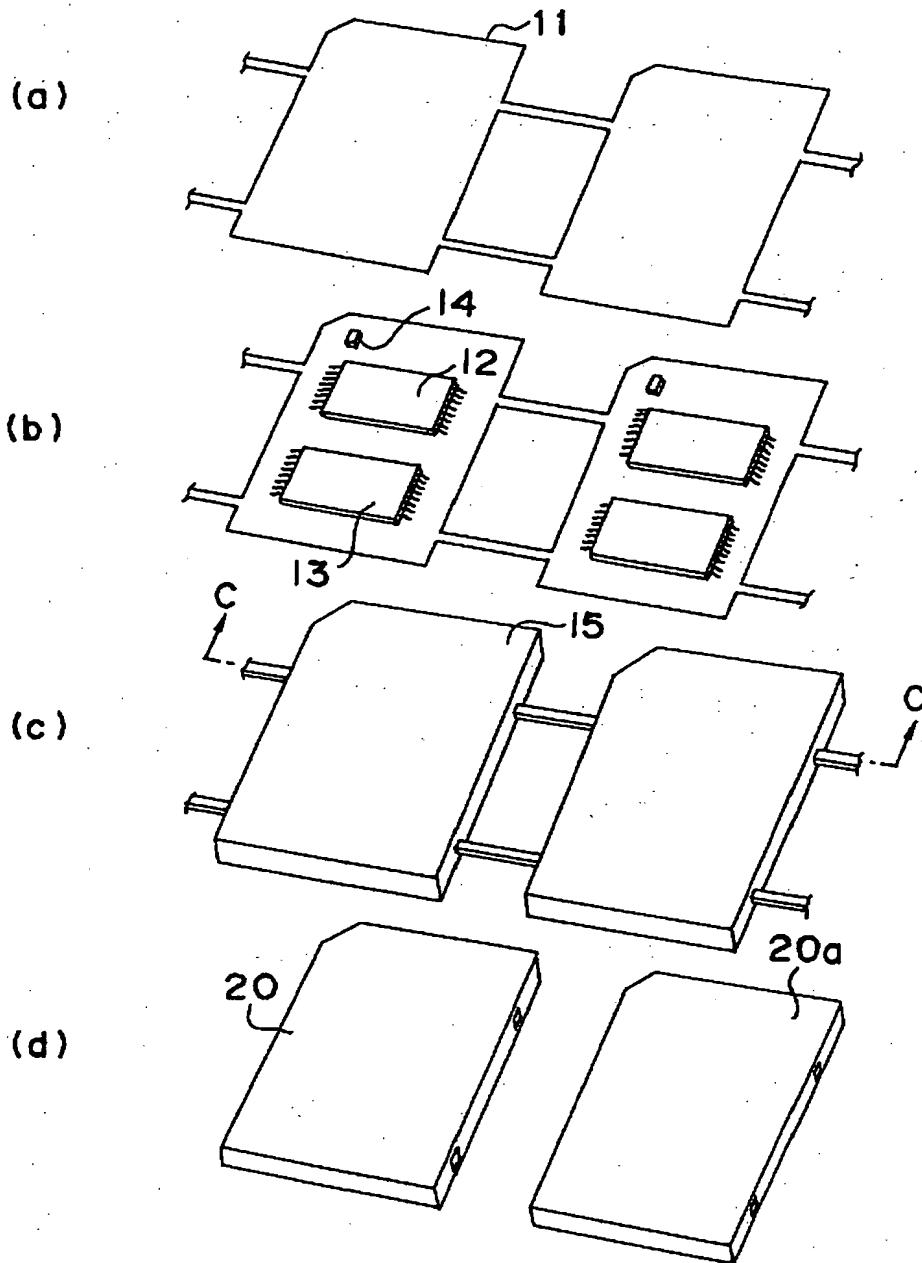




案件番号=526191JP01

提出日 平成12年 9月19日
頁数 3/ 6

[Fig. 5]

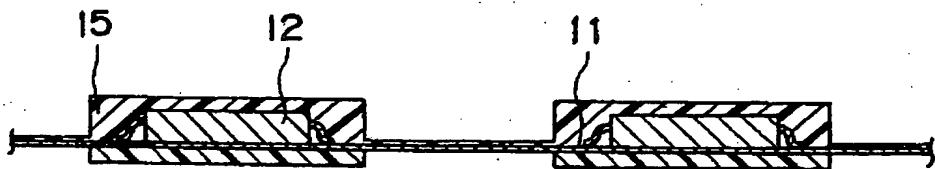




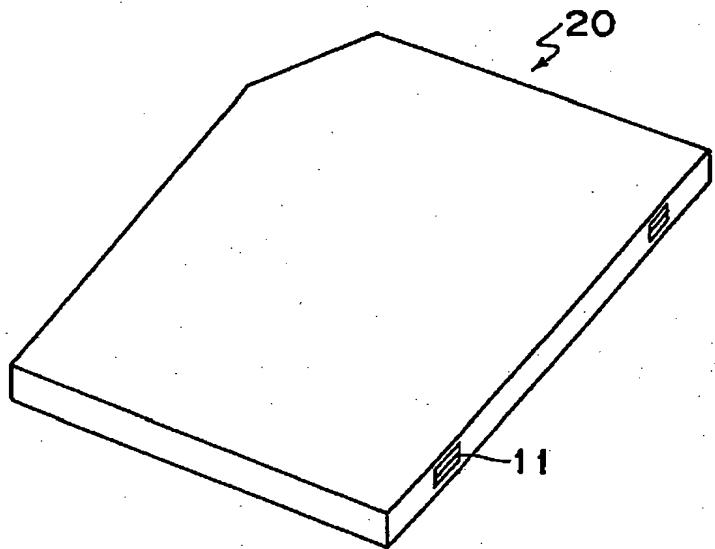
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一頁 4/ 6

[Fig. 6]



[Fig. 7]

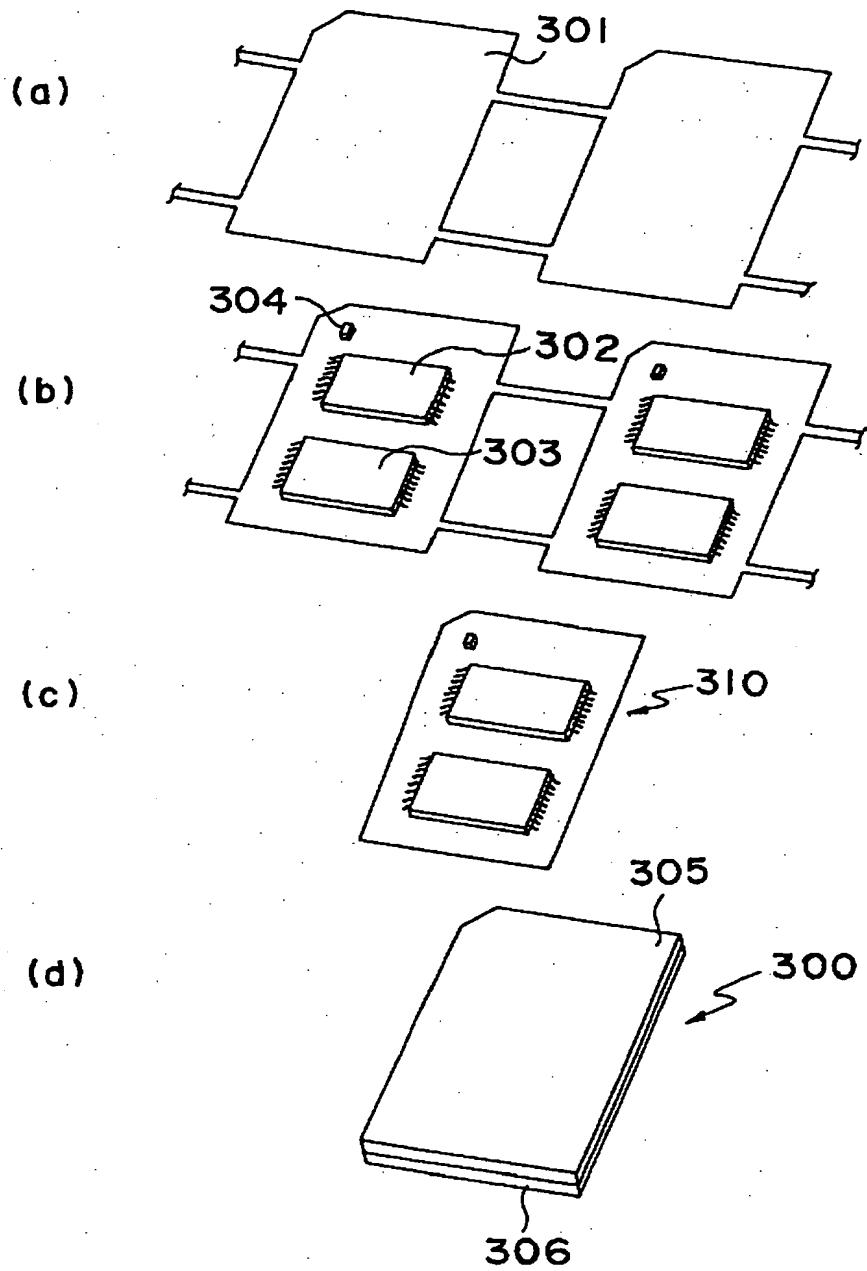




整理番号 6191 J P O 1

提出日 平成12年 9月19日
頁数 5/ 6

[Fig. 8]



JUL 21 2004
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JAPAN
JC25-3125

整理番号=526191-JP01

提出日 平成12年 9月19日
頁: 6/ 6

[Fig. 9]

